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MINORITY REPORT

OF THE

SELECT COMMITTEE

APPOINTED BY THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES

RELATIVE TO THE MODE OF ELECTING UNITED STATES SENATORS.

SELECT COMMITTEE

REPORT.

Mr. Loughridge from the minority of a select committee reported a bill entitled, an act to repeal the second section of the act of 1809, chapter 22, relating to the mode of electing Senators to represent this State in the Senate of the United States, accompanied with the following

REPORT.

The undersigned, a minority of the special committee to whom was referred the bill entitled, an act to repeal the act passed November session 1809 chapter 22, not being able to concur in the views entertained by a majority of said committee, begs leave to give his views on the subject by a minority report.

It cannot be denied that ever since the adoption of the Federal Constitution in the election of the Governor by the Legislature, the incumbent was chosen alternately from the Eastern and Western Shore of the State; and it is equally certain that in the selection from the Western Shore the choice has, with one exception, been confined to Baltimore city, and the counties of Anne Arundel, Prince George's, Charles, Calvert, and St. Mary's, to the entire exclusion of all the counties north and west of the above named city and counties, thus depriving the Western Shore of honors which her population, wealth, intelligence and patriotism entitled her to, in common with other parts of the State. To remedy this crying evil, and to avoid dangerous sectional legislation, the Constitution was changed in 1836 and 1837, laying off Gubernatorial districts from which the Governor should alternately be chosen by the people. This wise and just provision so commended itself to the inherent sense of political justice in the State, that it was engrafted upon the new constitution, which has been adopted by an overwhelming majority of the people, and is thus commended to our favorable consideration as a precedent by an authority which none dare disregard. In analogy to the practical regulation respecting the selection of Governor, the act of 1809, chapter 22, was passed; in relation to the selection of United States Senator, and which in its practical operation has been

pregnant with the same evils, and if possible, to a more alarming extent. For the fact is indisputable, that for about three score and ten years, the Senator for the western shore has been chosen exclusively from the city of Baltimore and Bay counties, and that in all this period the counties of Baltimore, Harford, Howard, Carroll, Montgomery, Frederick, Washington, and Allegany, have each and all been denied a participation in that honor. And the undersigned feels constrained to add, there is no reason for any well grounded hope of change for the better, unless it can be accomplished by law. And whatever may have have been the original circumstances which may have excused the choice from such a restricted locality—all must admit that the reason for it no longer exist; for those counties have now grown to a degree of prosperity in wealth, population, intelligence and agricultural importance, which may justly challenge a comparison with any part of the State. Nevertheless, they are still excluded—and in the opinion of the undersigned, the occasion calls loudly and imperatively for reform, and the bill submitted to them ought to pass with an amendment or additional section providing that in all future elections of United States Senator, the incumbent shall be chosen from the Gubernatorial districts alternately, as directed in the Constitution—and as there are two Senators and only three districts, this will enable the Legislature to elect a faithful Senator two terms in succession from the same district, making twelve years in all—a period sufficiently long to consist with the theory of republican government.

The undersigned therefore recommend that the title of the bill be amended by adding the words "and to provide for the selection thereof from the Gubernatorial districts alternately"—and at the end of the bill add the following section:

"And be it enacted, That in all future elections for the office of United States Senator by the Legislature, the Senator shall be selected from one of the Gubernatorial districts as designated in the Constitution, alternately, and that the next Senator to be elected shall be selected from the Third (Western) district, and the next from the second district, and the next from the first district, and so on successively, reserving the order established by the Constitution for the selection of Governor by the people.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

WM. LOUGHRIDGE.